News Archive - August, 2005

8-31 Workshop "How To Watch A Play" Begins in Bethesda

The Writer's Center in Bethesda kicks off a seven-session workshop to be conducted by Charter Theatre's dramaturg Richard C. Washer. Participants will attend performances of three different plays and then meet to discuss what they have seen from the perspective of a writer. The workshop begins tomorrow night with an introduction and then participants will attend performances of *Passion Play - a cycle* at Arena Stage on September 7, *Building a Boat* at Charter Theatre on October 13 and *The Beginning of Summer* by the Quotidian Theatre on November 11. Cost of the workshop is $220. Phone 301-654-8664.

8-30 CENTERSTAGE Shuffles Season to Present Final Wilson Play

Radio Golf, the last of August Wilson's ten plays examining the African American experience of the twentieth century, decade by decade, will have its Potomac Region premiere at CENTERSTAGE in Baltimore next Spring. In order to accommodate the play, CENTERSTAGE will move the Noel Coward comedy *Hay Fever* out of the March 24 - April 23, 2006 slot, presenting it this November 3 - December 4 instead. *Radio Golf,* the 1990's installment of Wilson's cycle, is set in the Hill District of Pittsburgh as are so many of the other plays in the cycle.

8-29 National Players Set Four Performances at Olney Before Starting 57th Tour

The National Players, billed as America's longest running classical touring company, launches its 57th tour with two pay-what-you-can performances of each of the tour's two shows next month at their home base at the Olney Theatre Center for the Arts. On September 24 - 15 they will perform *Taming of the Shrew* and on September 21 and 22 they will perform *Dracula*, both in Olney's Historic Mainstage. The troupe of 12 young actors ranging in age from 22 to 29 will then set out on their 20 state tour which has already scheduled performances at 56 venues.

8-26 Rorschach Sets Intriguing 2005-06 Season

Rorschach Theatre has announced the four plays they will mount in the Casa Del Pueblo, the former sanctuary of the Calvary Methodist Church on Columbia Road, NW. They range from Amy Freed's comedy about just who might have written Shakespeare's plays to Tony Kushner's application of the adage "evil triumphs when good men do nothing" to the story of Germany during the rise of Nazism, and from a translation/adaptation of an eighteenth century Japanese comedy to a modern play set on the hottest night of the year. Click here to view the schedule.

8-25 Kiki & Herb Resurrect at Woolly in October

Woolly Mammoth has booked the lounge act parody team of Kiki and Herb (played by Kenny Mellman and Justin Bond) for a brief return to the Potomac Region this fall. Their *Kiki & Herb in Pardon Our Appearance* played here in 2002. Now, their *Kiki & Herb: The Resurrection Tour*, will play Woolly's new house on D Street NW for a five-performance stop, October 20 - 22.

8-24 Ursula and Nicholas Set for Lincoln Theatre's Flyin' West

Flyin' West, the latest joint production of Washington's Lincoln Theatre and Atlanta's True Colors Theatre Company will reunite Dawn Ursula and J. Paul Nicholas who starred in the Everyman Theatre production of *Yellowman* which was a Potomac Stages Pick earlier this year. The cast also includes Pat Bowie, Crystal Fox, E. Roger Mitchell and Kinnik. The play is slated to run September 11 - 25.

8-23 Shakespeare Theatre's Guide to Season's Plays Available

Every year the education department of The Shakespeare Theatre prepares a magazine-sized guide to the plays in the theater's season. The guide includes detailed synopses, histories, analyses and scholarly essays which can enhance the experience of attending the plays. This season's edition covers *Othello, The Comedy of Errors* and *Love's Labor's Lost* by Shakespeare, *Don Juan* by Molière and Aeschylus' *The Persians*. Copies are available for purchase at the theater or by calling 202-547-5688. The price is $20.

8-22 Baltimore Benefit Features Lion King Cast Members in Gospel Music Program

Cast members from *The Lion King*, who are now performing at the Hippodrome, will use their off night tonight to raise their voices along with groups from Coppin State University and others to raise funds for Historically Black Universities and Colleges as well as Broadway Cares/Equity Fights Aids. The concert begins at 7 pm in the James Weldon Johnson Auditorium of Coppin State University, an institution that traces its history back to 1900 when a program to train African-American elementary school teachers was initiated by the Baltimore City School Board. The concert - titled *Pride and Praise: A Gospel Musical Celebration* - will feature half a dozen members of the cast of *The Lion King* along with the choirs of Coppin State, Morgan Stage University and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore as well as local performance companies. The college is located at 2500 West North Avenue in Baltimore and tickets are $45 ($30 for seniors and $20 for children or students.) For information, call 410-951-3400.

8-19 Spamalot Tour To Include National Next June

The national tour of the 2005 winner of the Tony Award for Best Musical will have a stop in Washington early in its cross-country jaunt. The tour, which will begin in Boston in March and stop in Chicago in April will arrive at the National Theatre on Pennsylvania Avenue on June 7 for a one month run. No casting has yet been announced. The musical advertises that it was "lovingly ripped off from the movie *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. The National has also announced that Dame Edna will be returning to the theater with the new show *Dame Edna: Back With A Vengeance*. It will play a two week run starting February 21.

8-18 Off-Broadway Switches Wong to Role of Jenny Chow

Rolin Jones' play *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* which was designated a Potomac Stages Pick "for enormously entertaining intellectual challenges" during its successful run at the Studio Theatre Secondstage which ended last weekend, will have its New York premiere starting with previews later this month. Eunice Wong, who won praise for her leading role role as the computer wonk who builds the robotic Jenny Chow, will switch over and perform as the robot in the New York version. Playing the computer wiz will be Broadway veteran Julienne Hanzelka Kim. The production is scheduled for a limited run at the Atlantic Theater Company through October 15 with a formal opening night on September 19. The Atlantic Theater Company is at 336 West 20th Street in the Chelsea neighborhood south of the Broadway Theater District. Tickets (at $50) are available through telecharge at 800-447-7400.

8-17 Astin, Rae, Ziemba, Auberjonois and Frith To Star In Ford's Regional Premiere of Ludwig's Ladies

Ford's Theatre has announced the cast for the Potomac Region premiere of Ken Ludwig's comedy *Leading Ladies*. Charlotte Rae and John Astin will be the headliners. The cast will also include Tony Award winner Karen Ziemba, Remy Auberjonois and Potomac Region regular Daniel Frith. The show is scheduled to run September 23 - October 23.

8-16 Silver Spring Sets One-Act Festival

This year's festival of one-act plays at The Silver Spring Stage will have three sets of plays over the three weekends. Here's the line up:

Weekend 1 (August 19 - 21) -

- *Perfectly Good Airplanes* - Steve LaRocque's play about a Father/Daughter reconciliation.
- *Arlene Cuts Loose* - An afternoon joy-ride by three elderly ladies is the subject of Nancy Jaquish's play.
- *The Emporium* - One of Thornton Wilder's lesser known plays.

Weekend 2 (August 26 - 28) -

- *The Dangers of Tobacco* by Anton Chekhov

My Norman - Jack Goodstein's study of jumping to conclusions

- *Cottonwood* - Four high school friends celebrate their 20-year reunion around a bonfire in Audrey Cefaly's play

Weekend 3 (September 2 - 4) -

- *Missing the Train* - Geoff Weinman's look at a man's life, his women and his best friend.
- *Good Night* - an elderly couple rekindle their passion in a play by Jim W. Cary.
- *Cornered* - Rosemary Frisino Toohey asks "If a woman can no longer touch the man she loves, is it right to push him into someone else's arms?"

8-15 Arena's Board Takes In Shows At Other Theaters - and Takes Kids Along

The Board of Arena Stage is reaching out to the rest of the Potomac Region to broaden its own understanding of the incredibly vibrant theater community in the area. Members have formed the Arena Stage Board Theater Club to attend shows at other major professional theaters including Ford's, The Shakespeare Theatre, Signature Theatre, Studio Theatre, Theater Alliance, Theater J and Woolly Mammoth. What is more, when they buy their tickets to the shows, they are buying additional tickets in order to host high school and college students. The board and their guests meet with the artistic director of the theater they visit after the show to discuss the goals of the theater and the theater community in general. Last week, a group of twenty-three board members and eighteen guest teens attended a performance of *The Clean House* at Woolly Mammoth.

8-12 Potomac Region Musical Theater Performers Stage Leukemia Benefit Saturday

A host of performers from local stages will appear tomorrow night at the Heritage High School in Leesburg in a fund-raising benefit for the Leukemia/Lymphoma Society. Nano Gowland, who appeared in the Arlington Players' *Jekyll and Hyde* and Dominion Stage's *The Cain Mutiny Court Martial* will host the evening which will include WATCH Award nominees Lisa Bailey, Gilly Conklin and Linda Ray, NVTA One-Act Festival Award Winner Deb Crawford, Alliance of Community Theaters Award winner Ryan Khatcheressian. Other performers are Kat Brais (*One Touch of Venus* at The American Century Theater), Jennifer Lambert (*The World Goes 'Round* at the Little Theatre of Alexandria), Tammy Roberts (*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at Signature Theatre) and Janet Devine Smith (*Kiss Me, Kate* at The Arlington Players). Elisa Rosman will provide musical accompaniment. Admission is $15. The address of Heritage High School is 520 Evergreen Mill Road, Leesburg. Curtain time is 8 pm.

8-11 African Continuum Theatre Co. Names New Managing

D. Gerald, Jr., a native Washingtonian who grew up in suburban Maryland, has been named by Artistic Director Jennifer L. Nelson as the new Managing Director of ACTCo as it takes up residence at the Atlas Performing Arts Center in NE. Mr. Gerald has just completed a two-year assignment as Associate Managing Director at Signature Theatre in Arlington under a grant from the New Generations program of the Theatre Communications Group. He holds a degree in Theatre and Drama from Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA and studied arts management at American University.

8-10 Plan for Labor Day Now - Kennedy Center Festival Schedule Announced

The Kennedy Center has released the schedule for the fourth annual Page-to-Stage Festival, the three day festival of new works which will offer nearly forty free performances in eight different venues within the Center. Performances are scheduled from 3 to 10 pm on all three days of the Labor Day weekend, September 3 - 5. Thirty-eight companies from around the Potomac Region and even the Contemporary American Theater Festival of Shepherdstown, West Virginia, will present free readings and "open rehearsals" of new works from their upcoming seasons. Among the most anticipated are Ken Ludwig's adaptation of *Treasure Island*, Signature Theatre's premiere of *Nevermore*, a musical by Matt Conner and Norman Allen using the poetry of Edgar Allen Poe as lyrics, the Quotidian Theatre Company's production of *The Beginning of Summer*, a never-before-staged play by Horton Foote, and an adaptation of Whoopi Goldberg's book *Alice*. Click here to view the entire schedule.

8-9 Gershwin Room on Capitol Hill To Close During Construction

The George and Ira Gershwin Room in the Library of Congress' Jefferson Building, which hosts a permanent display of

material from the Library's extensive collection of Gershwin memorabilia, has to be closed as of this Sunday to accommodate construction activities related to connecting the new Capitol Visitor's Center to the Library. The room will re-open after the construction. However, for now Sunday is the last chance to see George's piano, Ira's writing desk and other items that cover the careers that included *Porgy and Bess, Of Thee I Sing* and *Strike Up The Band*, among so many other classics of musical theater.

8-8 MetroStage Starts Early With Added August/September Show

The 2005-06 season for Alexandria's MetroStage will start early with a show remounted after a Los Angeles premiere, *The Sandstorm: Stories from the Front* by USMC veteran Sean Huze who served in Kuwait and Iraq. The play is being produced by independent producer Charlie Fink and will play at MetroStage August 17 - September 25.

8-5 Signature Switches First Cabaret of the Season

The 2005-06 season of cabaret series at Signature Theatre will kick off next week with a program titled *The Kids From Catholic* instead of *Mass Transit* that had originally been announced. *Mass Transit*, with Dan Cooney, Tamryn Hayden and Greg Stone, has been postponed. The August 12 and 13 opening of the cabaret series will feature three vocalists who are graduates of the Catholic University of America's nationally recognized Musical Theatre program. The three are Helen Hayes Award nominee Lauren Williams, who was in *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum* and *Allegro* at Signature, Kurt Boehm, who was in *One Red Flower* there, and newcomer Jessica Dukes. There will be two performances each night, at 7 and 9 o'clock.

8-4 Jackson Takes Foucheux's Place For Last Week of Extended Take Me Out

The oft-extended *Take Me Out* at Studio Theatre has extended again, this time to August 14,but Rick Foucheux couldn't go along for the ride. Foucheux's role will be played by director Kirk Jackson in the final seven performances between August 10 and 14. M.D. Walton, who played the role of the baseball star who reveals his homosexuality, has already left the cast. That role is being played by Jacques Coward II who played the role in a production in Philadelphia.

8-3 The Ushers' Monthly Favorite Show Award Goes To . . . The Clean House!

The theater enthusiasts who usher in the theaters in the Potomac Region, and who participate in the Ushers' Favorite Show Award program sponsored by Potomac Stages, have named as their favorite show for the month of July, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company's delightful production of Sarah Ruhl's comedy with a message, *The Clean House*, which plays through August 14. The production was designated A Potomac Stages Pick as "a touching play about the power of laughter." This is the second production of Woolly Mammoth to win the award. Their production of *The Radiant Abyss* was the choice of the ushers in June of 2004.

8-2 Young Friends Set Up Theater Company To Put On A Show

A number of graduates of South Lakes High School in Reston Virginia, back in town for the summer from their various colleges, have formed their own theater company and rented the Second Stage space at the Warehouse Theatre on 7th Street NW to present J. Carter Beane's play *The Country Club*. They named their company Walking Shadow Theatre Company after Shakespeare's line "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more." (Macbeth, Act V, Scene V.) Performances will be Friday and Saturday at 7 pm and Sunday at 2 pm for the next two weekends.

8-1 Olney Sets Next Year's Schedule

Maryland's Olney Theatre Center for the Arts schedules its seasons on a calendar year basis. The schedule for 2006, the first full year utilizing their New Mainstage theatre has now been set. It includes a stage adaptation of Henry James' novel *The Heiress*, the Cole Porter musical *Anything Goes*, the revue *Jaques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, Larry Shue's comedy *The Foreigner* and the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *Cinderella* on the Mainstage and productions of Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* and *The Enemy of the People* (in an adaptation by Arthur Miller) in the Mulitz-Gudelsky Theatre Lab. Also announced is the world premiere of a play by Irene Wurtzel, *In The Mood*, in the Mulitz-Gudelsky.

Click here for the news archive for July